



COMMUNITY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

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COMMUNITY SERVICE NEWSLETTER is published six times a year by Community Service, Inc. Our purpose is to promote the small community as a basic social institution involving organic units of economic, social and spiritual development.

politics and language of growth

by Richard Grossman

What is growth? Growth, we are told repeatedly, is our goal. Just having growth proves that the correct monetary, labor and resource policies are being pursued. Even experiencing "negative growth" affirms the growth process by legitimizing the growth purveyors and limiting people to the tried and true.

Isn't it amazing how we allow our language to be polluted? How we buy back our own resources and tools after having sold our labor for a song, and volunteer for clean-up again and again without forcing the growth purveyors to stop their deliveries of deadly junk?

The language of growth is based on the canonization of quantity. Quantity is easy to demonstrate and measure. Quality, on the other hand, has no measure in the language of growth. And inequality has no place. As long as the purveyors of growth are able to equate quantity with success and wisdom, with justice and freedom, and as long as the purveyors control investments and dominate decision making, it is difficult for reformers to point out convincingly who's responsible, what isn't being counted, who is being short-changed, and what could be done instead. Should there be harm to individuals, communities, or the Earth we are taught to concede that such phenomena pale in comparison to demonstrable benefits of measurable growth.

The language of growth effectively conceals social relationships, sources of investments, choices of technologies and production systems, and styles of decision making. On a fragile, living Earth reeking with inequalities, the language of growth facilitates gobbling resources and manipulating people, plants and animals by a few for the few.

I suggest that politically, culturally, and maybe in our very souls by now, we have become disastrously entangled in the tentacles of growth. Even progressive people from diverse disciplines think mostly in growth terms. They advocate "more growth" to repair communities in our country and to bring freedom to countries in the Third World. Few acknowledge that the political and social relationships comprising the great growth dynamic are what have created the very inequalities and destruction they seek to remedy. Instead, people expend time and energy arguing with growth's promoters and mobilizing growth's victims to obtain mere adjustments in the pattern of growth.

So we need now to expunge growth--as language and politics--in ways that expose the hands controlling growth, ways that enable people to see and feel the strength in their own hands. Then we could talk clearly and directly about what we want and need: food,

trees, transportation, heat, education, money, homes, pure air and water, and our land.

It is vital to look at cause and effect. Between 1960 and 1980, improvements occurred in many arenas: civil rights, housing, employment, access to education, food and social services, reduction of poverty, as well as public health and the environment. These improvements were the result of the organizing that swept society from the beginning of the modern civil rights movement in the 1950s. It was not "growth" that brought nutrition to the malnourished, but political organizing. It was not "growth" that ended legal segregation, but planning, marching, demonstrating and dying. Nor was it "growth" which raised consciousness about health and the environment; it was educating and organizing. On issue after issue, people forced themselves into the closed circles of decision makers, armed with specific demands and backed by organized public pressure.

For a time in the 1960s and 1970s people were successful at redirecting investments, but their reforms did not really challenge the growth process. As "victories" were being chalked up, the growth promoters were not asleep. They were methodically redefining the issues, rewriting history, and taking credit for progress, all the while furthering and legitimizing the process and language of growth. At the same time they were taking steps to constrict the circles of decision makers, and to strengthen their control over labor, resources, and money.

There was a new problem during those years for these purveyors of growth: environmentalists. As Grant Thompson wrote in Environment (May, 1985), environmentalists were motivated by "widespread dissatisfaction with the costs that a careless technology was imposing on the common good." However, as people essentially isolated from other movements seeking empowerment, there was little sense, except in isolated communities, that the environment could be best served by linking issues and joining with the other victims of the growth process to expand democracy and alter the growth system's basic structure.

Growth promoters, along with their subscribers and enforcers, rushed in to confirm environmentalism as just one more special

interest. Environmentalists began to find themselves confronted not only by the purveyors of growth, but also by righteous constituencies of consumers, wage earners and those traditionally discriminated against who were persuaded that environmentalists were the enemy.

People coming to the political arena motivated by health and environmental issues in the early 1970s thus found themselves put on the defensive by a majority that had embraced the promises and strategies of growth. This was curious indeed, as the environmental movement certainly had not been calling for radical transformation of society nor had it anything personal against workers, the poor, minorities, etc. In fact, as the environmental movement matured, it settled modestly for curbs, for pollution control, for amelioration of side effects, for laws that were licenses to pollute. It sought to hide the limitations of this unchallenging "pollution control" strategy behind what it called "sustainable growth," just as the remnants of the FDR coalition had hidden their acceptance of increasing unemployment behind the equally vivid label of "balanced growth."

Gradually, the locus of environmentalism began to shift from towns and cities around the country to Washington, D.C. The taming of grassroots environmentalism, its channeling into the growth process, and its absorption into the language of growth, were under way. Credibility was not to be sought among the victims of growth, but among its purveyors. Single issues were to be the rule; recall the strenuous efforts made by nuclear power and nuclear weapons protestors to keep their distance from one another.

Environmental leaders acted as if they believed effectiveness required focusing attention only on the specific pollution and not on the principal production and political power of the polluters. They either didn't know about or chose not to draw attention to threads running through scores of disasters and battles or through the institutional arrangements that, predictably enough, were resulting in a steady supply of destructive and unjust societal decisions. The dominance of growth politics directed most environmental organizations to negotiate with growth's promoters instead of massively

mobilizing growth's disparate victims into a truly radical movement.

By a truly radical movement I mean one that sought to unmask the growth process and to change it. Such a movement would connect health and environmental destruction to high and persistent unemployment, meaningless work, pervasive poverty, and private exploitation supported by government intervention around the world. A radical movement would campaign in ways that affirmed the right of people to govern their own destinies. By doing so, it would effect changes in the relationship between producers and consumers.

While some environmentalists did pursue these goals, just about every environmental struggle continued to sustain built-in contradictions between quantity and quality, between control and democracy, between jobs and the environment. This was illustrated by the fallout accompanying the 1972 publication The Limits to Growth which set out to ask, "How much growth will [the Earth] support?" The book's answer to this and related queries was: "Growth will lead to the limits to growth."

As far as the authors were concerned, human empowerment and changes in producer-worker-consumer relationships, or even in the First World-Third World relationships, were not in the cards. Rather they argued that the principal hope of the planet lay in technological expertise which would create a stable world economy without changing the basic world order.

Because the book was locked into the language and process of growth, Limits could offer only one alternative: LESS. But blithe talk about less was not likely to be popular among people who had been persuaded that their inferior status would be alleviated by participating in the structure, however unsatisfactory, of MORE. Smelling blood, the purveyors of growth leaped in to make sure that debates were framed as MORE (i.e., hope) vs. LESS (i.e., hopelessness).

In addition, the purveyors of growth realized that to prevent the whole pollution and inequity mess from blowing up in their faces, they needed to tighten their economic and political hold over money, resources, tech-

nologies, workers and consumers. They understood that to the extent to which they could get politicians and the press to define specific health and ecological problems as "growth vs. no-growth," the purveyors would maintain a key advantage. In a contextless debate between MORE vs. LESS, they would find it easy to isolate the advocates of LESS (environmentalists) by manipulating the victims of MORE (workers, minorities, small farmers.)



The debates following publication of Limits were long and passionate. And because we have had debates on growth vs. no-growth, on MORE vs. LESS, many people mistakenly think we have had debates on production and control in an ecological context. Thus did Limits, the debates it spawned, and the memories it left behind do its share to scare off or confuse many who could have helped integrate ecological values into broader agendas for social equality that would reach beyond growth politics. Limits provided the purveyors with a club not only to beat back polite, moderate environmentalism, but also to preempt crucial radical thought expressed in a new language.

To be accepted thereafter within the national political arena, environmentalists chose their own dignified growth concepts, the favorites being "sustainable," "qualitative," and lately, "high-tech." In the late 1970s, for example, when anti-nuclear, safe energy and pro-solar movements were at their peak, many institutional advocates--myself included--tried to keep our critiques and recommendations in the safe context of MORE. We said the nation could "grow" with solar and conservation investments. In addition, most solar advocates scurried to distance themselves from the few who sought to dismantle the petroleum and nuclear industries. Even though safe energy activists understood the need to redirect several hundred billion dollars in energy money, their political strategies relied on reassuring the growth coalition that no one was really after their control and

profits. They made clear that they would be satisfied to let the growth purveyors include among their wares solar energy and all the appropriate energy-efficient technologies.

Thus the stage was set for abandoning solarization and energy conservation to the "free market," where it would be dependent on the price of oil and the status of Reaganism. The acid rain debate follows a similar pattern, as do current debates around toxics and weapons of mass destruction. Much attention is paid to scrubbers, controls, dispersal and disposal. But producing less in the first place by changing the way our production, consumption and social justice decisions are made, is not considered an acceptable or credible direction.

As Wolfgang Sachs recently noted ("Delinking From the World Market," in the Living Economy, 1986): "A new generation of industrialists, planners and scientists are working hard [to take] society more firmly into their hands. A capital-intensive, administrative-intensive and research-intensive solution to the crisis of growth is looming on the horizon." We now have to free our minds from the oppressive language of growth so that we can free the Earth from this determined new generation of purveyors. This means joining "single-issue" victims of the growth process to discuss what we have, need and want and how we can best share the decisions and work, and its pains and fruits.

A new wave of grassroots Greens is busy talking and assembling here and abroad. They are struggling to penetrate production, work and equity problems and to devise energizing organizational and educational strategies. People seeking justice and ecological sanity today need to become part of this new wave so that it does not go the way its forebears did in the early 1970s. We need to nurture the discourse of eco-decentralism and community self-reliance now being proposed and help the nation conduct debates now long overdue.

There are many ways to bear witness. But I think we need to adopt basic principles so that diverse paths complement rather than undermine one another. I suggest a few:

1. It is our right to open up issues for debate that heretofore have been taboo: what we make and how and who decides?

2. In our process of opposition, we should try to expose and change whatever it is that impels governments or private bodies to derail moves toward different ways of thinking and expansion of the democratic process.

3. We should not support processes, institutions, technologies or agreements that are fundamentally destructive to communities or to the Earth.

4. We should not support strategies that widen the gap between rich and poor, between powerful and powerless.

5. We should do what we can to stop our own society from supporting power inequities and ecological destruction around the world.

Surely we can take back control over our politics, our work, our resources. Surely we can have the debates we need to establish our goals. And we can organize to win them.

This article was edited from "The Politics and Language of Growth" which appeared in the Spring 1987 issue of Earth Island Journal. It, in turn, was based on "Growth as Metaphor, Growth as Politics," which appeared in Mr. Grossman's Wrenching Debate Gazette. Copies of the original may be obtained by writing Grossman at 5303 Dorsett Pl. NW, Washington, D.C. 20016. Richard Grossman is an environmental writer and activist. He is the co-author of Fear at Work and former director of Environmentalists for Full Employment and Greenpeace, U.S.A.



"The unrealistic sound of [our] propositions is indicative, not of their utopian character, but of the strength of the forces which prevent their realization."

--Herbert Marcuse,
One Dimensional Man, 1965

BUILDING the self-reliant community

by Burt Berlowe

In 1970, a group of residents of Minneapolis' Cedar-Riverside neighborhood started a "back-yard" club to distribute whole natural foods to each other. They purchased food in bulk wholesale and divided it up on the rear porch of a community couple's home, Alvin and Diane Oderman. In less than a month, word had spread to over 50 more people who expressed an interest in joining the effort. The club soon moved to the basement of a community center, then leased a storefront from an area college. There they set up a bustling, volunteer-run business, North Country Co-op, the first food cooperative in the Twin Cities. Within a few months, North Country had helped seven food co-ops start elsewhere in the city, while folk musicians in the community played benefits at no cost to raise money for the enterprises.

From this early pioneering effort the Cedar-Riverside or West Bank neighborhood has become a model of a self-reliant neighborhood. It is populated by a generation of residents who have worked innovatively and cooperatively towards community control through food and housing co-ops, alternative energy and medical care, down-home music and grassroots political activity; an expanded example of what organizer Warren Hanson has called "Ectopia," an ecological utopia created by people.

The West Bank currently has a co-op grocery and pharmacy, several hundred units of resident-owned housing that contain alternative energy and community gardens, as well as a locally-bred festival and theater district and a community center/health clinic that has become a focus of neighborhood cultural and political activity. In recent years, the neighborhood has run energy workshops and educated residents on how to organize on their own behalf. While successfully limiting a massive high-rise development, West Bank grassroots organizations have simultaneously built a homegrown or people's community steeped in the concepts of populism, democracy and self-determination.

There are several significant aspects of the West Bank's evolution. Individually, it has marked the onset of a new age for a community with a history of counterculture, often militant, political activity. The Bohemian atmosphere of this neighborhood remains but it has been accompanied by a calmer, more conciliatory and positive approach, focusing on community-building that has become a local model.

On a larger scale, Cedar-Riverside is a pioneer of what has become a nationally popular idea--the fashioning of a self-reliant community. In cities throughout the country, grassroots groups are developing and running their own neighborhoods. In some cases this has meant the actual construction of new sustainable communities, where energy conservation, alternative technology, urban agriculture, community-controlled housing, businesses and transportation function interdependently and humanely, and income is recycled back into the community.

One current example is Marin Village, California which includes 1900 dwellings in five distinct neighborhoods, all with private gardens and terraces connected by pedestrian walkways and bikepaths. It has over 50 acres in agricultural and energy production, an abundance of on-site recreation, sewage treatment and disposal, mini-buses, a village community center, shopping district and employment center along with local networks in home care, crime prevention and food production.

According to its founders, the main objective of Marin Village is to establish a sense of neighborhood and a "greater opportunity to do collectively what people have previously done separately." In some ways this concept is based on the garden city movement of the 1890's, the idea of a greenbelt city, patterned after kibbutzes or communes that define an economic, political and philosophical basis for small community.

Most of the contemporary efforts to build the self-reliant or "eco-community," as some have called it, focus on working within existing neighborhoods, much as was done in Cedar-Riverside, to build a truly homegrown civilization. One of the popular examples of this concept is a process called "regeneration," which emphasizes using resources already in

the community to rebuild it from within. Regenerative economic development is defined as the creation of goods and services from locally available resources through the building of community and work that is in harmony with nature. It is an economy of regional interdependence based on self-reliance in agriculture, ecology, politics, technology and theology. The Twin Streams Center Experiment cited in a previous issue of this newsletter is a good example of this concept.

However it is done, the move towards democratic community has had a dramatic impact on society. Author Gary Coates puts it this way: "... the growing movement towards local self-reliance is redefining our cities, neighborhoods and households" David Morris of the Center For Local Self-Reliance adds: "The signs are there, the harbingers of a new way of thinking, ... cities are beginning to redefine their role in society."

In addition to its concrete aspects--block clubs, food co-ops, gardens, recycling and the like, the eco-community ideally contains less tangible attributes and benefits. In Cedar-Riverside, organizer Ralph Witcoff used his interest in alternative energy to organize the West Bank Community Union, which subsequently protested high-rise development in the neighborhood. All over the country, citizen groups have utilized the concepts of self-reliance, from sweat equity to community gardens, to organize residents around a myriad of issues and, in the process, to enhance citizen participation.

A major aspect of such organizing is the commitment to improving resident interaction. As far back as 1942, Arthur Morgan's book, The Small Community, set forth some of the principles of an effective small community. These included not only advocacy of specific policies like emphasizing local economy and community-based culture, but also less tangible ideas like increased neighborliness, helpfulness, critical inquiry, respect for individuality, leadership development and equal opportunity for all. These concepts have been put into practice in countless examples of contemporary community organizing.

The move towards the homegrown community is a holistic one, combining many elements. Most such communities will encompass some of

these concepts, a few may include them all. Either way, the benefits to citizens and their organizations can be manifold. Not the least of these benefits is the capacity to take back or reclaim the small community as a key element of urban existence and as a means of self-determination. Through this movement, cities and the communities within them are primarily in the hands of the people where they rightfully belong.

The preceding article was excerpted by Mr. Berlowe from a chapter of his forthcoming book The Homegrown Generation: A People's History of the Neighborhood Movement.



conference 1987

by Jane Morgan

This year's Community Service conference on "The Self-Reliant Community" will be October 23-25. Bill Berkowitz, author of Community Dreams and the newly-published Local Heroes will speak Friday evening on "The Heart of Community Action." This will be about the inner dimension of community change, the personal qualities which seem most closely associated with successful community action, and how they can be developed. These are themes brought out in Local Heroes which will be available at the conference (reviewed on page 9). Saturday and Sunday Bill will lead a workshop on "Private Life--Community Life," in which he will focus on the interrelationship between these two spheres of activity.

Jeff Bercuvitz is director of the Regeneration Project, a special effort of Rodale Press which provides individuals and organizations with practical information to help them build community spirit, strengthen their local economy and improve their living environment. Saturday morning Jeff will talk about "Regeneration: Vision and Movement for the 1990's." He will lead a workshop Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning on this topic and include ways to solve a variety of civic,

economic and environmental problems. Saturday evening Jeff will lead a discussion on what community revitalization really means and will talk about successful ways to revitalize one's community.

Sue Jackson is with the Miami Valley Small Business Incubator in Yellow Springs, which provides technical services and management consulting for inventors, small businesses and entrepreneurs. Sue will speak to both the economic and social side of "Small Business Development" including her experiences in cooperation with a regional mental health center in developing meaningful work choices for physically and mentally disabled adults. There will be an opportunity to visit the Incubator on Saturday afternoon.

If you wish to attend this conference/workshop and have misplaced your brochure with the registration form, just write or phone us and we will send another: Community Service Inc., P.O. Box 243, Yellow Springs, OH 45387; 513/767-2161 or 767-1461. We look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones.



URBAN COMMUNITY

by Mildred Gordon

Mildred Gordon writes in her cover letter to us, "I am sending out this literature at this time because we just acquired another building that will give us room for about 7 or 8 new residents. This new space also makes it more possible for us to welcome visitors, for as long as they would like to stay."

The following is a description of an unusual New York City cooperative community, an attempt to develop a socio-economic political alternative. It is a non-profit, tax-exempt, secular, educational research organization.

It describes what we consider our very unusual attempt to develop a socio-economic, political, or maybe simply a self-selected

family model. We consider ourselves unusual because there are very few non-religious, non-doctrinaire, intentional communities in urban centers anywhere. As far as we know, there are none at all in New York City.

There is enough wrong with the world, and with how we relate to each other, for people everywhere to be seriously considering social and personal lifestyle alternatives. Some seem convinced that nothing short of radical change will keep our species from total self-destruction. I think even those that are less extreme in their outlook agree that it should at least be possible for us to live saner, healthier, happier, more loving and less wasteful lives, both individually and collectively.

In general, I know of two basic approaches to social change. One assumes that if you make the world okay, the people will do fine. The other assumes that if the people are okay, they'll make a fine world. The first focuses on creating better rule systems, and more humanistic environmental conditions, in the belief that better nurturing and control will eventually produce human capability for intelligent self-governing, enlightened self-interest, and loving relationship. The second approach suggests that all persons are able to improve their individual capability enough to construct and govern their world effectively and happily, with minimum need for rigid rules, if they want to. The difficulty is finding the motivation to want to.

Our group, supported by the Foundation for Feedback Learning, is engaged in an unusual living experiment that aims at developing the second kind of alternative. Most intentional communities, because they have opted largely for the first alternative, tend to select quiet, low stress, inexpensive, rural areas in which to live and work. We chose New York City. Rather than avoid the pressures of incredibly rich urban resources, we have elected to try to acquire better skills for coping with stress and preventing distress.

Each of us has undertaken to learn how to keep the internal environment quiet and functional, no matter what the external setting. It is our intention to do this without the comfort of religious belief, or the help of fixed doctrine of any kind. Hopefully we

will become fully flexible in our approach to just about everything, except coercive violence to people, things, or information. We are committed to learn to keep things open to question; to develop functioning structure, with the machinery for change always up front; to replace fixed rules, values, or norms with good problem-solving in relation to clear but fluid goals; and to remain receptive always to here-and-now information. The hard part is trying to keep these principles available for re-evaluation and change, as experience mandates, while enjoying the whole process on a day-to-day basis.

About 30 of us live and work together in five large, attractive, well-maintained buildings, that we re-modelled to suit our pleasure and our needs. The gardens and outdoor living spaces are quite lovely; equipment for work, study, and play is excellent; privacy is surprisingly consistent for communal life in a big city; and we're only a half-hour ferry ride from downtown Manhattan.

Three populations live together in our community: The core group consists of five men and five women, with a variety of backgrounds, skills, ages, and personalities. The ten of us have pooled all our resources, will do whatever we decide needs to be done to achieve our purposes, and are more bonded to each other than most nuclear families. All of us try to encourage and support the individual preferences, personal dreams, and projects of each of us. The core group is open to new members, but isn't seeking any.

The second group works with us and gets their expenses, training, some money, and whatever else we can do to help in exchange. A few of these people will eventually join the core group.

The third group that lives here, works outside of the community and pays \$500 a month to cover their expenses and their training fees. Several of our core group members started in this way too.

Our income generates from our two retail businesses, residential training fees, and the outside work of some of the core group members. We are economically comfortable, very secure, and enjoy our life together almost all the time. Projects cover a range

as wide as our people's interests. They include health education, clean-up and other community programs, and English as a Second Language.

The political contribution we hope to make involves creating a model of community that is governed with the consistent and effective participation of all of its members; each functioning as an autonomous individual, motivated by desire for an improving quality of life for everyone. We hope to replace hierarchical structure and competitive positioning with universal self-empowerment, in a participatory democracy. Our method is feedback learning, a process that involves speaking about whatever is going on, and listening for responses, particularly those that are critical or in opposition. We constantly test the assumption that good, on-the-spot performance feedback, and ongoing information exchange will enable us to learn to think and act together effectively; and that this process will eventually ensure the ability of each of us to make changes in our own conditioned behavior when necessary. In practical terms, problems in our house are usually handled as they come up and people are encouraged to speak their thoughts and feelings freely. We must be on the right track, because fights don't get far enough to do damage to our relationship. If we share a faith, it's in human potential for intelligence, creativity, love, and self-management.

The basic premises that we test in function daily, and sometimes hourly, are:

1. That love made less frightening by good coping and problem-solving skills, will provide us with a secure baseline of shared pleasure and all the motivation we need.
2. That good feelings of whatever kind, are always present when functioning is normal; and that therefore life is, at bottom, more a "bowl of cherries," than a "vale of tears."
3. That our species is basically social; and that empathetic understanding and love represents natural and very efficient social functioning, and therefore they feel good.
4. That pain or unhappiness replaces pleasure whenever threat or malfunction are perceived. In this context, negative experience is the

signal of something wrong that needs attention, and positive experience will return as soon as the problem is solved. If the thing causing pain cannot be corrected, good adjustment is the process of returning to a new baseline of pleasurable experience, and usually to a new level of wisdom as well.

5. That aggression is defensive rather than instinctual; and that it is almost always less effective than other, more reasonable ways to relate to problems.

This in general describes our life together on Staten Island and our objectives. Progress is slow but very steady. If you would like to find out more about us firsthand, visitors are welcome anytime. Contact us at 135-139 Corson Ave., Staten Island, NY 10301; (718) 720-5378.



BOOKS

LOCAL HEROES by Bill Berkowitz. Lexington Books/D.C. Heath, Lexington, MA, 1987. 350 pp., cloth. Available from Community Service for \$18 postpaid prior to conference.

Imagine you live in a community where: you are affirmed and respected, feel safe and protected, know your neighbors and are known by them, can count on others for help and be counted on in return, the half-mile radius around you is filled with friends, your creative energies can be released, you feel embraced by your surroundings and where you smile when you walk down the street.

Berkowitz believes that this kind of community can be created through the actions of ordinary people like you and me. The "local heroes" he writes about are just such ordinary people who saw a need in their own communities, went after it and met it.

Berkowitz offers us this book because he believes "... we can use reminders of what works best. Reminders ... serve a proper and necessary function by keeping us on course and by narrowing the gap between who

we are and who we could be ... And so we need (and seek) reminders whether spoken in church, or spread through the media, or posted on the refrigerator door."

When Berkowitz went looking for "ordinary people" to write about, he went looking for people who began with little in the way of money, resources, expertise, outside backing, or formal power. He interviewed people all over the country and included 20 interviews in his book. The book is not structured in the typical question and answer format. People simply tell their own stories in their own words, using every-day grammar and speech rhythms. This gives the book an intimate, homey feeling; the only thing missing is the kitchen table and the pot of coffee.

The "local" in Local Heroes is key. The author's thesis is that local action has more impact, is specific, immediate, and realizable; and it builds community. As one person interviewed put it: "If local communities all organized around issues, then this would be a democracy of the people. Now it's not...as we'd all like to believe."

The heroes include some nationally known people, such as the founder of M.A.D.D. or the woman who brought Love Canal to our attention. But we also hear from the people who gave us "The International Zuccini Festival" and from Wally, "The Singing Bus Driver." But regardless of whether you've seen them on the national news or not, they all started in response to a need identified in their own backyard.

The stories can be appreciated on many levels. First, they're very human. Our heroes have fears, conflicts, anger, failures, triumphs, insecurities, passion, humor, sadness. They are an equal opportunity assortment of heroes who span the demographic scales.

We also get some really interesting analyses. One woman considers manual labor as the key to eradicating the divisions that exist among us. "...I've made roof rafters with one group of people who consider themselves Marxist, and another group of people that consider themselves born-again Christian. But when they're pounding nails and building houses for people, and all doing the same thing, those word-ideas that divide us collapse."

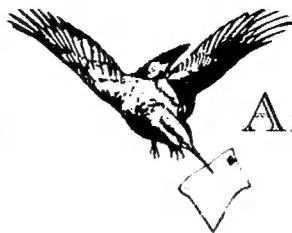
The interview with the founder of the Guardian Angels is fascinating and insightful regarding crime and the deterioration of family and neighborhood. "When I'd look at the drug prevention programs, well, it was the sons and daughters in that neighborhood that were selling it and taking it - why should there be a federal agency? ... If kids are on the corner with a dope problem, that's for us to deal with, not government, not an agency. We have to be the first line of dealing with that because once it gets to...that level, it's beyond being solved, it's going to perpetuate itself."

A man who set up a volunteer-staffed justice system to mediate small-scale neighborhood conflicts has some "radical" things to say about how our system of justice makes us feel incompetent and powerless, encourages us to abdicate responsibility in favor of "professionals," and doesn't teach us peacemaking and peacekeeping skills.

The book is tied together with some thoughtful analysis by the author. What deters local heroism. How can we make it happen? Is this something we can teach? Are the schools teaching it? Do social service agencies facilitate it?

As an additional bonus, long-time and would-be community organizers get some nitty gritty information and "how-to" advice about fund-raising, media strategy and short and long-term planning. All this and more from the folks that have done it; often in a big way.

Berkowitz captures the importance of Local Heroes when he writes: "Local community work provides an arena for the cultivation and display of vision, of risk, of adventure, of personal odyssey, of overpowering of demons, of triumphant return, of all the attributes of heroism which have served us from antiquity and which we need at least as much of as we enter the next millenium." How can we resist?



Announcements

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Community Service Annual Membership Meeting will be Saturday, November 21, in Yellow Springs. Any member who lives close enough to attend may ask to be in our "active" or participating category of membership and will receive a notice of the meeting.



PRICE CHANGE

Since our review of An Enchanted Childhood at Raven Rocks appeared in our March/April issue, a second edition has been printed and its price has gone up \$2.00. It is still available from Community Service, but now sells for 17.00 postpaid.



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The Institute for Community Economics, Inc., is seeking a LOAN FUND OFFICER with experience in community development finance to evaluate loan proposals, assist borrowers in preparing applications, and work on fund initiatives. I.C.E. is also seeking a SECRETARY with typing ability, facility with numbers and good communication skills. I.C.E. works for economic justice and integrates political values with personal lifestyle. It assists community-based groups across the country in efforts to secure land, housing and capital to meet the needs of low-income people. It is a residential community that houses and supports staff. Compensation is modest and based on need.

For job description and further information contact; Coordinating Team, Institute for Community Economics, 151 Montague City Road, Greenfield, MA. 01301 (413) 774-7956.

TRANSITION

We jumped the gun several months ago, but Theresa Fallon really is now moving on to another challenge. We trust this will be good for both her and Community Service. We are very thankful that Jean Putnam, co-founder of The Friends Music Institute, helped during the transition period. Julie Otterson will be our new office manager.



GOODBYE

I have greatly enjoyed my two years at Community Service. It has exposed me to many wonderful people and ideas. I feel I have gained a vision of what community can and should be and, like you, will be continuing to strive to make those ideas a reality.

My new position is at Antioch College in Yellow Springs (another institution heavily influenced by Arthur Morgan). Thus I will be able to maintain close contact with Community Service and those members who attend the conferences and correspond through the newsletter.

It has been exciting to realize how many different, good people are working to make their families, neighborhoods, cities, and the world into a more cooperative, loving community. Best wishes and a fond farewell.

Theresa



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Membership

Membership is a means of supporting and sharing the work of Community Service. The basic \$15 annual membership contribution includes a subscription to our bi-monthly NEWSLETTER and 10% off all Community Service-published literature. Larger contributions are always needed however, and smaller ones will be gladly accepted. Community Service is a non-profit corporation which depends on contributions to run its operation. All contributions are appreciated, needed and tax deductible. Due to added postage costs, overseas membership is \$20 in U.S. currency.

Have Your Friends Seen the Newsletter?

Please send the names and addresses of your friends who might enjoy receiving a sample NEWSLETTER and booklist. (If you wish specific issues sent, please send \$1.00 per copy.)

Editor's Note

We welcome letters to the editor (under 300 words) and articles (700-1500 words) about any notable communities or people who are improving the quality of life in their communities. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish the article returned. The only compensation we can offer is the satisfaction of seeing your words in print and knowing you have helped spread encouraging and/or educational information.

Editor's Note #2

We occasionally exchange our mailing list with a group with similar purposes such as the Arthur Morgan School at Celo or Communities Magazine. If you do not wish us to give your name to anyone, please let us know.

Address Changes

If there is an error on your mailing label, please send the old label and any corrections to us promptly. It increases our cost greatly if the Post Office notifies us of moves, not to mention that we like hearing from our members and friends!

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You can tell when your Community Service membership expires by looking at the month and year in the upper left corner of your mailing label. Please renew your membership now if it has expired or will expire before 10/87. The minimum membership contribution is \$15 per year. We do not send individual reminders to renew.

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